



NEWS RELEASE



THE LINCOLN-LANCASTER WOMEN'S COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Lincoln-Lancaster Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Coalition to Participate in National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, May 7, 2003

Teens Nationwide Will Take Online Quiz

The second annual National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, taking place May 7, 2003, is an online effort to get teens nationwide to stop, think, and decide what they will do to avoid teen pregnancy. On the National Day, teens will go online to www.teenpregnancy.org and take a short, scenario-based quiz that asks young people what the best thing to do is in a number of sexual situations.

The National Day is sponsored by the nonprofit, nonpartisan National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and the National Day's founding partners, *Teen People* magazine and Teen People Online. The Lincoln-Lancaster Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Coalition (TPPC) will be mailing postcards from both the National Campaign and local sources to public policy and community leaders, and distributing posters about the event. In addition, more than 140 prominent national organizations have signed on as National Day partners.

As part of the effort to bring attention to May, National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Awareness Month, the **Lincoln-Lancaster Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Coalition (TPPC)** will be mailing two postcards per week to policy makers and community leaders. These postcards will serve to focus on the challenge of teen pregnancy in the Lincoln-Lancaster County area. Each postcard will feature a fact about teen pregnancy, and include:

! 52% of all mothers on welfare had their first child as a teenager. (Child Trends, Inc.)

! Teens are less likely to begin having sex when they have a close relationship with their parents.

! In 2001 in Lancaster County:

61% of 12th graders

47% of 11th graders

37% of 10th graders

24% of 9th graders

Reported having had sex. (LLCHD 2001 Vital Statistics)

! Teenage mothers:

are less likely to complete high school or college

are more likely to require public assistance

are more likely to live in poverty than their non-pregnant counterparts

! In 2001, 322 babies were born to teen mothers in Lancaster County. The young mothers who gave birth included:

3 babies born to teen mothers age 14

6 babies born to teen mothers age 15

34 babies born to teen mothers age 16

69 babies born to teen mothers age 17

83 babies born to teen mothers age 18

127 babies born to teen mothers age 19

(LLCHD 2001 Vital Statistics)

! When asked where they learned the most about preventing teen pregnancy, more teens said parents than friends or the media. (According to a recent National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy survey.)

! Babies born to teen moms in Lincoln in 2001 will fill up 17 kindergarten classrooms in 2006.

! American advertisers use sex to sell everything from automobiles to clothes to music. Too bad Americans can't sit down to talk about sex to prevent teen pregnancy.

The Message of the National Day: The message of the National Day is straightforward: teens need to think about the importance of postponing pregnancy and parenthood until they are adults, and they should make a personal commitment to do so.

Why a National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy? Despite progress during the last decade, the United States still has the highest rates of teen pregnancy and birth among comparable nations. Four out of ten girls still become pregnant at least once before age 20 and the vast majority (78 percent) of teen pregnancies are unintended. "The National Day Quiz serves as a concrete activity to help teens break through the 'it won't happen to me' wall of denial," said Sarah Brown, Director of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

Support for the National Day: National Day partners include a diverse group of over 140 prominent national organizations, including:

! Health sector leaders (American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Medical Association)

! Education leaders (National Education Association, National School Boards Association)

! Major U.S. corporations (Procter & Gamble, Candie's Foundation)

- ! Media powerhouses (WB Network, Sony Pictures Television, Radio Unica, NOGGIN/The N)
- ! Teen websites (Bolt, Inc., teenopendiary.com, beinggirl.com, gURL.com)
- ! Fatherhood and male involvement groups (National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families, National Organization of Concerned Black Men)
- ! Faith-based groups (Covenant House, United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries)
- ! Other prominent national organizations (Child Welfare League of America, National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, YWCA of USA, Jack and Jill of America, National Parenting Association, National Council of La Raza, National Urban League, Goodwill Industries, Afterschool Alliance, Save the Children, National Association of Police Athletic Leagues)

How the National Day is Being Recognized: National Day partners, communities and individuals are recognizing the National Day in a variety of ways, including:

- ! Community organizations around the country have events planned (visit teenpregnancy.org for details).
- ! National Day activities will be featured in Teen People magazine on newsstands in early May.
- ! Talk show host Ricki Lake has taped a special “National Day” episode of her television show.
- ! The N, the nighttime programming for teens on the NOGGIN network (owned by Nickelodeon), will air a special episode of their documentary series, “A Walk in Your Shoes.”
- ! Channel One News, which reaches 8 million students a day in classrooms nationwide, will air special news programming about the National Day.
- ! The WB Network’s website, TheWB.com, will continue to address teen pregnancy in their programming as well as promote the National Day Quiz on their website.
- ! Teen websites such as Freevibe.com, GirlZone.com and YouthNOISE.com will feature the National Day with web banners and editorial comment.

Why the National Day is an Online Event: About 17 million youth aged 12-17 use the Internet - 73 percent of those in this age bracket. Many of those online are looking for health information. A recent national survey reported that *young people use the Internet to search for health information more than to shop or download music*. The online nature of the National Day Quiz also allows for widespread dissemination because teens can pass it on to their friends through emails and instant messaging.

About the National Campaign: Founded in 1996, the National Campaign is a private, nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the well-being of children and families by reducing teen pregnancy. The organization’s goal is to reduce the teen pregnancy rate by one-third between 1996 and 2005.

Founded in 1988, the Lincoln-Lancaster Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Coalition is a broad representation of community agencies and individuals working together to find common solutions to the issues resulting from teenage pregnancy. The Coalition respects a diversity of philosophical viewpoints, but leaves these philosophical positions up to each member organization. As a group, the Coalition works together in those areas of group agreement.